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**STATE OF VERMONT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

MEDIA RELEASE

**STATE ASKS NRC ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON
REACTOR SAFEGUARDS TO REVIEW
VERMONT YANKEE SAFETY ISSUE**

MONTPELIER, VT – The Department of Public Service has asked an independent branch of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, to review safety issues of concern to the state surrounding Entergy's application to increase the power output at Vermont Yankee by 20%. Specifically, the Department has asked the ACRS to review Entergy's request to take credit for containment overpressure in the event of an accident following uprate. The Department filed a petition for a full adjudicatory hearing on the same issue with the NRC at the end of last month.

David O'Brien, Commissioner of DPS said, "The Department has always vowed to have our safety concerns heard in the correct venue – the NRC. Requesting the ACRS to review the containment overpressure issue in addition to requesting a hearing on the issue is a second avenue to having our questions resolved. We want to make sure that Vermont Yankee is safe if an uprate of power output is allowed."

The Department is questioning whether Entergy should be allowed to count on a certain amount of pressure in the reactor to allow emergency core cooling pumps to run in the event of a post uprate accident. The Department is asking ACRS to examine the issue in terms of maintaining sufficient safety margins, discouraging operator confusion in the event of an accident, and maintaining the principle of defense in depth, which calls for multiple safety systems to stand independently of one another.

The ACRS is a group of eleven individuals with a wide variety of engineering expertise. The ACRS functions independently of NRC staff and reports directly to the Commission. They provide independent reviews on the safety of nuclear power plants and the adequacy of proposed safety standards. ACRS will review the power uprate request made by Entergy. The Department has laid out its concerns for the ACRS in a letter but also requested that it be allowed to make a presentation before the ACRS during the committee's deliberations on the proposed Vermont Yankee power uprate. The Department also requested that ACRS have one of its meetings regarding Vermont Yankee in the vicinity of the plant.

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